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C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 000683

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/23/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [ENRG](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: OMAN REQUESTS MEETING WITH U.S. IAEA DELEGATION TO  
DISCUSS COOPERATION ON NUCLEAR ENERGY ISSUES

REF: STATE 48644

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo for Reasons 1.4 (b, d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is an Action Request. Please see paragraph 5.

[1](#)2. (C) At the request of the Omani Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ambassador met on September 21 with Ambassador Ali bin Salim bin Mas'ud al-Ma'amari, Chief of the MFA's newly established Office of Peaceful Nuclear Technology. In addition to an MFA note-taker, al-Ma'amari was accompanied by a man identified only as Dr. Suleiman al-Sharif. Al-Ma'amari told the Ambassador that he would travel at the end of the month with an Omani government delegation, headed by MFA Secretary General Sayyidi Badr al-Busaidi, to Vienna, Austria for the annual General Conference of the IAEA during which Oman will become a full member of the organization. While in Vienna, he hoped to meet with members of the U.S. delegation to the IAEA to discuss "cooperation and coordination" on issues related to nuclear energy and asked the Ambassador to help arrange such a meeting. Al-Ma'amari confirmed that Oman was "looking at" the possible use of nuclear energy in the future, which prompted in part the request to talk with U.S. officials in Vienna.

[1](#)3. (C) The Ambassador promised to help facilitate a meeting between the Omani delegation and U.S. representatives at the IAEA General Conference. He also noted that in May 2008, the U.S. had sent an interagency delegation led by Ambassador Jackie Wolcott, Special Envoy for Nuclear Nonproliferation, to the region to discuss U.S. interest in assisting countries in their pursuit of nuclear power (reftel), and regretted that Oman had not been able to receive the delegation at that time. Al-Ma'amari replied that he and other Omani officials would be very pleased to meet with Ambassador Wolcott or a similar delegation either in Geneva or Muscat, repeating that Oman was intent on "improving cooperation with the U.S. on peaceful nuclear technology for the future."

[1](#)4. (C) On September 22, Abdullah al-Riaymi, Deputy Director of the MFA's International Affairs Department, told Pol-Econ Chief that approximately 13 Omani officials would comprise Oman's delegation to the IAEA General Conference in Vienna. He also identified the individual who had sat in on the Ambassador's meeting with al-Ma'amari, Dr. Suleiman al-Sharif, as an independent consultant whom the Omani government had hired to advise it on nuclear and IAEA issues. According to al-Riyami, Dr. Sharif was a former Algerian energy minister who had worked for more than 10 years in the office of the IAEA Director General. (Note: During the meeting between the Ambassador and al-Ma'amari, Dr. Sharif stated that he personally knew the U.S. representatives to the IAEA in Vienna. End Note.) Al-Riyami also added that Oman had not taken any firm decision on whether to develop a peaceful nuclear energy program.

[1](#)5. (C) Action Request: Post requests that the Department,

in coordination with the U.S. UN Mission in Vienna, directly contact the Omani Embassy in Vienna to attempt to schedule a meeting between al-Ma'amari (with Dr. Sharif) and relevant U.S. officials during the IAEA General Conference. (Note: The MFA Secretary General will be in Vienna for only one day and reportedly will not have time for any outside meetings. End Note.) Al-Ma'amari indicated that he would be in Austria September 29 - October 4. As the UK Ambassador in Muscat told the Ambassador that al-Ma'amari had also requested a meeting with British officials while in Vienna, it is likely that al-Ma'amari is arranging appointments with several foreign delegations. End Action Request.

16. (C) Bio Note: Al-Ma'amari is a retired military officer with the rank of Major General. Until returning to Muscat this year, he served as the Assistant Secretary General for Military Affairs at the GCC Headquarters in Riyadh. He appears to be in 50s and speaks English, although not with a high degree of fluency. End Bio Note.  
GRAPPO